

The Spy's Contact

by stgulik

Remus meets Severus for a clandestine information exchange.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: This drabble is based on Azure_rosa's prompt, "The spy's contact." Thanks to teddyradiator for all the nudges, and thanks to the Snupin Santa mods for another great fest.

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-CRACK-

Remus' ears rang from the press of Apparition. Wand out, he scanned the shadows behind a row of darkened cottages outside Tutshill. It was getting harder to find off-the-beaten-track places to receive information for the Order.

There came a voice—no, a growl. "You're late."

"Happy Christmas, yourself," he replied.

Severus Snape's wand held steady. "Where did Remus Lupin lose his virginity?"

Remus chuffed a cynical laugh. "It's a nostalgic time of year, isn't it?"

"Answer."

"Behind Greenhouse Three, sixth year. On my birthday."

Snape lowered his wand. "What a memorable party that must have been."

"You would know."

-oOo-

The scents of the holiday: yeast bread, yule logs, cinnamon, snow. From the street beyond their hiding place came the boisterous chatter of happy families walking home from church.

Snape pulled parchment from an inner pocket. "The Lestranges plan to be in Lower Bluth Thursday. The Pinochet estate. The old man is an agitator. He and his grandchildren are to be made examples." The parchment enlarged into a map. "The house is Unplottable, but it is outside the village. Post sentries where marked and you'll be in the right vicinity."

"Thank you." Remus pocketed the map and took a breath.

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"Tomorrow is Christmas," he began, despising his trite opening line. "Where will you go?"

Silence. Both of them knew what was coming. Snape never made this part easy, no matter how many times the offer came. "Not to Grimmauld Place, surely," continued Remus with forced joviality, "although Molly would welcome the chance to fatten you up."

"I'll return to school," replied Snape almost reluctantly, "to rest and replenish my supplies."

"You don't have to travel so far, you know."

"Don't I?"

Remus sighed harshly, suddenly tired of the game. "Come home with me, Severus. Take a day off from skulking."

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Snape moved out of his shadow, his face pale and implacable as the moon. "Going to mull me some wine, Lupin? Sing me a carol, toast me a marshmallow?"

"Fuck off, Snape." Stung, Remus pulled out his wand, prepared to depart.

"Wait." Snape reached out and touched his shoulder. "I didn't mean that, exactly. I'm ... I'm just tired."

To Remus' surprise, he heard an apology in Snape's voice. They moved into each other's arms then, familiar strangers, become almost too jaded to distinguish between love and a surcease of loneliness.

Remus wondered when it would be too late for them.